absurd. Men who had received from their colleagues in the profession every mark of esteem, respect, and good will, have not hesitated to brand our English architects with incompetency in the most unwarrantable and unjust manner. They have declared to the world that out of 195 designs by their countrymen, only three are entitled to especial notice and commendation, whilst of foreigners' performances, seventeen out of thirty-seven are worthy of distinction; and to arrive at this decision they have unblushingly overlooked all their conditions of the competition, and made *post-facto* rules of requisites opposed to good faith and good practical sense; and in adopting and incorporating in their own design the suggestions of several Englishmen's drawings—suggestions which they had not the candour to acknowledge or report—they have belied their verdict and eaten their own words without digesting their meaning. The case is too glaring to admit of a doubt, and too important to be forgiven. If the architects are resolved to set the question of "fair competition" on a better footing, they must seize the opportunity offered (and a better can never occur) of teaching those who make a wrong use of power, that injustice is not always unpunished. Let the profession at large call a public meeting, for the purpose of appointing a committee to inquire into and report on the conduct of the professional committee in the late competition. Let the architects do justice to themselves in a temperate, becoming way, and I will answer for it that the public will respect them for a proper sense of their own dignity and character. If they do not, but remain submissive to the rod, they must never again complain if it be laid on without mercy by every petty trader who can influence a committee of parishioners to their detriment.

In making these remarks, I have done, for Englishmen, what on former occasions I have done for foreigners under ill treatment; and I hope that the character of my country will not be impaired either by subservient truckling or by timid selfishness, but, in a course of full, fair, and uncompromising emulation, they will meet their fellow men in open competition, from all parts of the world, without fear or favour. A PROMOTER OF JUSTICE.

ON THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF ORIGINALITY IN ARCHITECTURE.*

Even a new classic order has not been found, though numerous attempts have been made, at different times, to produce one; a failure ignorantly attributed to the fettered state of the human imagination, and the scantiness of its ideas. The Romans neither added, nor attempted to add, a new order to the primitive three. They had several kinds of Composite ones; the parts of the Greek orders they variously combined for the exhibition of diversity, and thus acknowledged their sense of the impossibility of generating a new one, specifically independent and distinct in its character. There is in truth no room for one. And if we are unable to discover a new species, we can have little hope of adding to the general (if I may use the comparison) in the shape of a new style. There is scope for invention in adapting these styles to our new purposes; and a modification of existing styles, so distinct as to have the effect of a new one, may grow out of them; but the invention of a new style is a chimera of the brain, from which the sooner we are delivered the better for the real welfare of the art.

If, then, we have a right to what time has left us of materials, and no alternative but to employ them, it only remains to mark out distinctly our course. Those who devote themselves to the pursuit of classic architecture have a good apology for their conduct; and those who choose the Pointed system are not without excuse. Most persons have a natural bias, a predominance of feeling in favour of one particular style, and each system will probably always have its exclusive admirers and followers. I see no reason why they should not be so cultivated: each expresses what the other could not so distinctly and vigorously express. The vertical principle of the one, renders it preeminently fitted for sacred purposes; while the antique is unquestionably best suited to those of a civil and domestic nature.

The development of the Gothic system was a remarkable advance in the march of architecture: possessing new attributes, unfolding a new principle equally natural with the horizontal, and which, worked out, is capable of the most striking results,—new and important lessons came with it into the great school of the art. For ecclesiastical or sacred ideas, it is, unquestionably, the best vehicle of expression. When religion is the thing to be voiced forth, it is the most vital organ. Traversing our venerable cathedrals, designer and workman are alike forgotten, and the edifice seems some organized and sacred birth of nature, sprung like a plant or tree from the parent earth, and instinct with a spiritual life; and "the long-drawn," pillared aisle, and "fretted vault," are eminently calculated to inspire devotional feeling, and awaken contemplation in keeping with their religious destination.

To the development of Gothic architecture we are thus indebted, not only for structures far superior to any ecclesiastical erections existing before, in size and splendour, but for extending the domain of the art, enlarging the sphere of its expression, and making its analogical and symbolical power more generally known and felt than it had been before. Symbolism is doubtless an element of art: along with analogy, it is the means of giving to edifices a definite signification, intimating the object, physical or moral, contemplated in their erection; and, in Gothic ecclesiastical architecture, that power was naturally directed to the utterance of religious thoughts and sentiments.

The imagination has had too much rein given it in explaining ecclesiastical architecture: symbolism is too much ramified, its language misapplied, and its power abused, when extended to particular theological doctrines. But though not sectarian—though it stoop to no creed—art is essentially religious. The preaching of Christianity gave birth to new ideas, and inspired new hopes, which, among other modes of expression, sought utterance also in architecture; and the rise of the Pointed system met this want more fully than the earlier ecclesiastic, or Byzantine, had done; and in the peculiar sublimity of the Gothic, its heavenward tendency, we behold a reflection of their new conceptions of the Deity, of the high destiny of the soul; and the general composition and style of our cathedrals may be considered as expressive of the harmony, spirit, and unity of Christianity. They seem to open a new world of emotion, exciting feelings totally different to those inspired by the great structures of other styles,—feelings connected with "the holy problem of the universe:" spurning earth, they refer to something beyond the bounds of time and the present scene, to another and more permanent state of existence.

Whilst speaking thus in reference to Gothic design, I must yet claim precedence for the antique architecture, in application to our multitudinous secular purposes. The Romans—and they were no slavish copyists—revered the Greeks as their masters in the school of art, and nothing remains for us but to tread in their footsteps, and follow their example.

Those who choose the Greco-Romano, or classic system, might plead its origin from the greatest people, in the finer exertions of the intellect, which the world has yet seen,—that the highest human genius reigning in its design, left the spirit of beauty there supreme. As far as their purposes demanded, the Greeks reached the beau idéal of architecture; their works bear the impress of finished thought, the most acute perception of beauty in nature, and the highest poetic feeling in portraying it. Such being the case, the Greek architecture finds response in the breast of every man of true taste, who must feel that the endeavour after a new style, to equal *that* in beauty, would be "the desire of the moth for the star."

It has been chosen, not only for its attributes as exhibited in Greek design, for its chasteness, its sageness, and grandeur, but for its vitality, its perfect organization, for its capability, where its spirit is thoroughly understood, of accommodating itself to every exigency of civilised life, and its faculty of expressing each variety of character, from the grave and solemn to the gay and mirthful. A copious, ductile, and at the same time nervous, fully developed, architectural language, susceptible of every shade of thought, and of giving harmony, grace, and expression, our multiform modern purposes eminently demands, and here is one fully answering the description, the one most capable of being moulded to various shades of meaning, and producing a specific expression. It was enriched, and grew big with the conceptions of a great people, who gradually moulded it to their purposes; and it has long proved itself capable of the most comprehensive application, without violence to its spirit and character.

For these reasons classic architecture has been chosen, but it is as the materials only of design. The objection that it is not of our country's growth, but of another clime and people, existing under institutions totally different from ours, is met by the fact of its universal adaptiveness; and I would only further remark, that all civilised nations have received it as they have their poetry and literature. If we derive our architecture from a foreign source we imitate the Romans, and even the Greeks themselves; and inasmuch as it was applied by both these nations to purposes different to ours, we have the greater scope for originality in its new application; its adaptation to our wants calls the louder for the operation of judgment and reason upon it; the fact at once throws us back upon our own resources in nature and invention, and discountenances and forbids copying. It had been fortunate for English art, if there yawned as wide a gulf between British and Italian institutions and usages.

We use these elements because we have a right to them; they are not the exclusive property of antiquity; nature is the only principle or element of imitation, the regulating type of architecture, and the basis of all true design; the principles of beauty in nature and those developed in art are identical, and every rule of true art having its foundation in nature is common property. The type of the columnar and trabeated system existed in nature and necessity, and nature furnished or suggested its details and decoration; it is nature brought down through the Grecian mind, interpreted, re-wrought for us, and is the property of humanity.

The three Greek orders, and the whole ordonnance or system would doubtless have appeared had the Greeks never existed; the natural types would have suggested it to other minds; it lay in the well of beauty, and must of necessity have been drawn up,—the destined task of the first refined and imaginative people.

The temples of the Greeks were peculiar to their climate and religion, and we have therefore no right to reproduce them; but the members, the mouldings, the elements of abstract beauty, which are used in their composition as the character of expression, are not so peculiar; adapted to all ages and nations and purposes, we are justified in their use. The simple and natural beauty of insulated columns, used as essential supports, the magic of peristyliar perspective, must charm while a perception of beauty, imagination, or feeling remains to man, and we are certainly justified in their use. A time cannot arrive, through whatever changes, when a Corinthian capital will not be beautiful; nor can any revolution in constructive science, arising out of new materials or otherwise, render the colonnade for every occasion improper, or altogether useless. Certainly the whole style or system, with the modification that common sense and good taste would always dictate, is adapted to all ages and to every clime. In this act or operation of adapting, there is nothing unnatural; the only way to surpass what has been done before is to avail ourselves of the labours of our predecessors, selecting, adopting, and adapting,—gathering the honey of beauty and truth from every flower that will yield it: we cannot be for ever creating, but we can assimilate and adapt; adaptiveness is a natural faculty, one we are constantly employing in other things; we are, indeed, for ever adapting.

What we have to do, therefore, is to improve our privileges, and use our materials truly and judiciously. We are richly dowered: an Ictinus, an Appollodorus has wrought for us, as every truly great man has wrought for posterity; and Greece, and Rome, and Italy are ours. The Italians added many valuable features to the original stock; and the Roman architec-

* See page 305 *ante*.

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